



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Oliver H. Stedman Government Center
4808 Tower Hill Road, Suite 3
Wakefield, R.I. 02879-1900

(401) 783-3370
FAX: (401) 783-3767

In accordance with notice to members of the Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council's Planning and Procedures subcommittee, a meeting of the subcommittee was held on Tuesday, January 15, 2008 at the offices of CRMC, Wakefield, RI.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Paul Lemont, Vice Chair
Donald Gomez
Bruce Dawson
Ron Gagnon, DEM

STAFF PRESENT

Grover Fugate, CRMC Executive Director
Jeff Willis, Deputy Director
James Boyd, Coastal Policy Analyst
Caitlin Chaffee, Coastal Policy Analyst
Brian Goldman, Legal Counsel

OTHER ATTENDEES

Wendy Waller, Save the Bay
Doug Groff

Call to Order. Mr. Lemont called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m.

Hearing no objection, Mr. Lemont asked the subcommittee to dispense with the reading of the usual opening statements, but to have them reflected within the record nonetheless:

The Planning and Procedures subcommittee meeting is an open public meeting; it is not a public hearing. Therefore, discussion is available to the Council members themselves, and to all else at the allowance of the Chair. The subcommittee is the program and policy development arm of the Council, and any programmatic decisions made by this group must ultimately be approved by the full Council in accordance with all proper procedures.

Mr. Lemont asked the members if there were any questions concerning the November 20, 2007 meeting minutes that was included in their agenda packets. There were no questions and Mr. Lemont requested a motion to approve the subcommittee's November 20, 2007 meeting minutes.

Mr. Dawson, seconded by Mr. Gomez, moved to approve the November 20, 2007 meeting minutes. All voted in favor of the motion to approve.

Item 4.A – Management Procedures. Section 5.2(1) – Contested Cases.

Mr. Gomez, seconded by Mr. Dawson, moved to table discussion of this item to a future agenda. All voted in favor of the motion to approve.

Item 5.A – Other Business. Coastal Habitat Restoration Trust Fund FY2007. J. Willis and C. Chaffee presented to the subcommittee this year's coastal habitat trust fund process and recommended projects for

funding. C. Chaffee explained that this year was the most competitive to-date as the projects reviewed were very well conceived and strong proposals.

Also, this year, the Habitat Restoration Team, as part of the review process, were made aware of a previous years award that now is not going to be constructed and the money returned. It was felt by the Team that the better use of that 'returned' money was to pass it to another deserving project. However, as C. Chaffee explained, since only recommended projects receive money, any 'returned' money couldn't go a project that may have been worthy for funding but didn't get recommended due to other projects in that year that were ranked ahead of it. Therefore, the Team developed a Contingency List of projects that are highly ranked but did not make the final recommended project list. C. Chaffee further explained that in the event that a funded project was not able to be implemented due to unforeseeable circumstances, the funds for that project could be reallocated to the highest ranked project on the Contingency List. And, any funds remaining after the highest ranked project is fully funded would go to the next highest ranked project, and so on.

The subcommittee discussed the merits of this idea and easily agreed that the creation of a Contingency List was a good product of the Team and that the approach should be used each year.

Mr. Gomez, seconded by Mr. Dawson, moved to approve the recommended list of projects and the use of a Contingency List and directed staff to make the necessary revisions to the state coastal habitat strategy so that the Contingency list is fully incorporated into the strategy. All voted in favor of the motion to approve.

Item 5.B – Other Business. Aquidneck Island SAMP. J. Boyd presented an update on the efforts to develop a SAMP for Aquidneck Island, as directed by the MRDP. J. Boyd has met with all three island municipalities, the most recent being with the city or town councils of each. He had previously met with local interest groups and planning commissions. Staff has asked for a letter of support from each community; Newport has sent theirs. J. Boyd explained how well-received these meetings have been.

Mr. Lemont asked about the status of excise lands. J. Boyd explained that 15,000 acres are yet to be excised by the Navy but the SAMP planning process is ideally suited to address this issue. In fact it is one of the common themes expressed by the communities, where CRMC SAMP development with the municipalities can ensure that these lands get excised in accordance to municipal and state needs as per the SAMP. Issues that all parties want addressed prior to any excise of federal lands are public access opportunities, recreation, and growth centers.

J. Boyd also presented that staff is working with URI/CRC to pursue an understanding of the AI West Side Master Plan performance standards for possible integration into our SAMP. He also explained upcoming meetings for the general public to keep everyone engaged in the SAMP planning process. Mr. Gomez asked about possible contaminated Navy land being excised. G. Fugate explained that if any such land was excise that the Navy would have to mitigate for it prior to any transfer. J. Boyd offered that the SAMP planning process is identifying issues such as that and compiling this information so that when excise is a reality, these issues will be known, understood and vetted for mitigatory purposes.

Mr. Lemont thanked staff for the update.

Item 5.C – Other Business. Ocean SAMP. G. Fugate presented an update on the efforts to develop an Ocean SAMP, as directed by the MRDP. He noted that MMS is the principle federal agency with regulatory overview of ocean areas and that they are looking at these areas for aggregate (mining) purposes. This effort could also benefit the Council in its management of south shore beaches: i.e.: sand sources exist offshore beyond the closure depth that could be used for beach nourishment. Additionally, the Coast Guard is looking at transportation routes and associated issues through this area that may affect offshore fishing.

LNG activities are still an important issue area that needs to be addressed. The Governor's office is considering energy alternatives for offshore areas that seek pre-permitted site(s). An Ocean SAMP would also look at fishery impacts; cable issues; migratory patterns; etc... Mr. Dawson felt that the Ocean SAMP needs to comprehensively assess the cable issue.

The EDC felt an EIS was helpful in addressing alternative energy issues, but they tend to need actual activities at specified locations. The CRMC proposed the SAMP as a better management tool because it is comprehensive pre-planning exercise. Currently, the Type 4 water designation is very broad. A SAMP exercise will help better define the water designation uses for this area.

G. Fugate explained that the Council's federal partner, OCRM, prefers this SAMP process due to its inclusiveness nature and resource management approach. Also, the three adjoining states have each expressed an interest in participating in this effort. He also stated that CRMC forwarded a proposal to the EDC for studies that would benefit the planning process. A recent federal effort to secure funding for four (4) meteorological stations in the Ocean SAMP area were not successful, though this is the type of data needed to help make the SAMP successful.

G. Fugate explained that the CRMC returned applications for wind and tide energy activities in the offshore areas as deficient because they contained no reviewable information for their stated purposes. He also stated that there is an interest in wave energy, but that that alternative/renewable form of energy was found to not have a high potential in this region of the country – it is better suited to west coast environments. He explained that to power Block Island, 200 wave energy units would have to be built. G. Fugate noted that wind energy potential is promising for this region.

G. Fugate stated that given the interest in this area for alternative/renewable energy activities, the Council may want to consider a moratorium on such until an Ocean SAMP is developed.

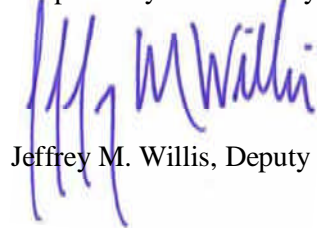
Mr. Gomez asked about the URI project with the Office of Energy. G. Fugate explained how this was a project between those two groups, but that CRMC was asked to partner with it, and CRMC has been an active participant in all aspects of this project. Mr. Gomez asked if the Energy Office could simply develop a plan/program and implement it. G. Fugate explained that any such program is still required to meet all applicable state regulatory requirements, and that that issue is a major task-point of the Council as it partners with URI and the state Energy Office.

Mr. Lemont was concerned that this partnership was more of a research project than an actual implementable project. G. Fugate explained that because wind energy is promising for these waters, the URI project lead investigator, Malcolm Spaulding, is very vocal that this project result in tangible results that lead to concrete information and data for decision-makers when entertaining requests for alternative energy activities in the offshore environment.

Mr. Lemont thanked staff for the update.

ADJOURNMENT. Mr. Dawson, seconded by Mr. Gomez, moved to adjourn the subcommittee meeting. All voted in favor of the motion and the meeting adjourned at 10:01 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by



Jeffrey M. Willis, Deputy Director